



LITTLE TOKYO BUSINESS IMPROVEMENT DISTRICT

e-newsletter



The envisioned Master Plan would add 712,000 sq. ft. of civic office space & 37,000 sq. ft. of retail.

Parker Center Historical Designation Denied **Little Tokyo Rallies to Support New Facility**

A strong push led by 14th District Councilmember Jose Huizar and supported by the Little Tokyo community has resulted in denial of a proposal that would have granted historical monument designation for the 60-year old Parker Center.

On Feb. 14, the Los Angeles City Council voted 10-0 to reject a proposal from the city's Cultural Heritage Commission and the nonprofit L.A. Conservancy organization to preserve the former Police Department headquarters.

The city's Bureau of Engineering has recommended tearing it down to build a 750,000-square-foot civic building. The new building, as conceived, would create corridors to Little Tokyo, El Pueblo, Union Station, and Chinatown.

Parker Center was designed by architect Welton Becket and built in the 1950s, when the city exercised eminent domain to displace Little Tokyo mainstays including Nishi Hongwanji Buddhist Temple, *The Rafu Shimpo* newspaper, small businesses, and professional offices.

In opposing Parker Center's preservation, Huizar said, "(Parker Center) does embody an important story about the history of policing in Los Angeles... but in some instances, abuse of power, cruelty and racism."



Councilmember Huizar
—Photo by Mario Reyes

Parker Center has been mostly empty since 2009, when the department moved to a newly built headquarters building about a block away.

Little Tokyo BID General Meeting March 15

All stakeholders, including those who own businesses, live, and work in Little Tokyo are invited to attend the Little Tokyo BID general meeting on Wednesday, March 15, at the Japanese American Cultural and Community Center, 244 S. San Pedro St., 3 p.m.

For additional information, email board@visittokyo.com or call (213) 880-6875.

Here's the [agenda](#)

Mitsuru Cafe Receives Metro BIF Support

Despite the lines of people waiting for the warm *imagawayaki* (pancake stuffed with sweet beans) and other treats at Mitsuru Cafe, the restaurant has experienced a downturn in business since construction began for Metro's Regional Connector.

Rumi Yamaguchi, daughter of Mitsuru's original owner, received assistance from the Business Interruption Fund, a Metro program designed to help merchants weather the construction-related challenges they may encounter.



Mitsuru Cafe's famous *imagawayaki*

[Read more.](#)

New Weller Court Shops Offer Sweet Treats

Two new cafes have opened at Weller Court and are already becoming Yelp favorites. Specializing in Asian-inspired treats, both businesses are located on Onizuka Street.

Midori Matcha offers a varied menu centered around organic, ceremonial grade *matcha* green tea, including soft serve ice cream, cold brew, and pastries.

Snowya specializes in *taiyaki* (croissant-like pancakes filled with sweet potato, red beans, custard, and other fillings) as well as flavored snowflake (fluffy ice) desserts and fresh fruit.

Located adjacent to the DoubleTree by Hilton Hotel at 1st and Los Angeles Sts., Weller Court is distinguished by two sculptures--**Friendship Knot** by Shinkichi Tajiri on the south



Snowya

end and a replica of the **Challenger** space shuttle dedicated to the late Astronaut Ellison Onizuka, the first Asian American to travel into space. Onizuka died in 1986 at the age of 39 when the Challenger broke apart. It was Onizuka's second space flight.



Midori Matcha

NEED ASSISTANCE?

Little Tokyo BID Safety Patrol
(213) 326-0636

Free Bulky Item Pick-up
[Go to Sanitation Department website](#)
Dial 3-1-1 or call (800) 773-2489

Submit an Event

Include your event in the Go Little Tokyo online community calendar.
[Click here](#) then scroll down to the "SUBMIT AN EVENT" button and fill in your event details. We will put it online ASAP.

Mikado Introduces Micro-Suite Living

The refurbished Mikado, a century-old, three-level, 43-unit hotel/apartment building at 331-335 E. First St. in Little Tokyo is scheduled to open this month.

Consisting of neatly appointed microsuits averaging 130-square feet each, the Mikado is intended to accommodate guests ranging from commuters and tourists to short- and long-term residents. Monthly rent reportedly starts at \$1,100, while daily rental rates have yet to be published.



Typical Mikado micro-suite

The building includes a rooftop lounge area and will soon welcome a ground level bar, **Sake Dojo**, conceived and operated by the same team that revived both the Far East Café and the Far Bar.

Originally designed by architect Alfred F. Priest and constructed in 1914, the building was known as the Mikado Hotel before and after World War II. However, during the war, with the forced removal of all persons of Japanese ancestry from the West Coast, Little Tokyo became known as "Bronzeville," and the Mikado was renamed the Shreveport Hotel with a soul food

restaurant on the ground floor.

The first floor has been restored to look as it did in 1932, and a 60-foot collage depicting Little Tokyo images past and present hangs along the length of the entry wall. The project was developed by Naty Saidoff of Capital Foresight and took two years to complete.

Marketing Seminar Set March 28

Marketing communication and brand management expert Meguru Riou will be the featured speaker during a seminar to be presented by the Japanese Chamber of Commerce of Southern California (JCCSC) on Tuesday, March 28, starting with check-in at 6:30 p.m. The seminar will be conducted in Japanese and takes place at the Japanese American Cultural and Community Center, 244 S. San Pedro St., Room 410.

Riou will offer insights into how to attract and keep customers. The seminar is free to JCCSC members and \$10 for non-members. Space is limited. [Register here](#).

マーケティングを□しく□えすぎではありませんか?
「□ってください!」と□わぶでも
お□□が□□に□いきでくれる□が□いすよね?
「□を」「□に」「どうやって」
「□れる□□み」を□るにはこの3つを□えればいゝのです。



Los Angeles City Councilmember Jose Huizar administers oath of office to 2017 LTBA Board of Directors.

Business Association Installs Board

The Little Tokyo Business Association kicked off the year by installing its 2017 Officers and Directors during ceremonies at the Miyako Hotel on Jan. 29. 14th District City Councilmember Jose Huizar, who represents Downtown L.A., Little Tokyo, Boyle Heights, El Sereno, and parts of Northeast L.A., was the main speaker and served as installing officer.

Established in 1959, LTBA manages the Little Tokyo Business Improvement District (LTBID) which is comprised of over 400 stakeholder merchants and provides a safety patrol, cleanup services, and marketing support. LTBA is dedicated to the growth and development of Little Tokyo as a vibrant, diverse and multi-faceted district.

Ellen Endo, owner of Hapa Consulting Services, leads LTBA as president. Senior Vice Presidents are Sylvia Ena (KW Realty), Joanne Kumamoto (Kumamoto Associates), and Masao "Mike" Okamoto (M. Okamoto & Associates, Inc.). Vice Presidents are Paul Abe (Union Bank), Keiji Kobayashi (Miyako Hotel), David Kudo (All Japan News), Tomoko Omura (Manufacturers Bank), Yuriko Shikai (Neufeld Marks), Haru Takehana (Takehana Real Estate Services, and Hiroshi Yamauchi (Koraku).

Andrew Lee (Advance Investments) serves as treasurer, and Edwin Takahashi (Kiyohara & Takahashi LLP) serves as auditor.

Directors for the 2017 term are:

Doug Aihara (Aihara & Associates Insurance)
Yoshitaka Ena (New Japan Travel)
Angela DeGroot (Japanese Village Plaza)
Thornton Dickerson (Pacific Commerce Bank)
Tamako Henken (Henken Galleries)
Sharon Im (California Bank and Trust)
Nobo Kakuma (NT Auto Repair)
Yoko Kawaguchi (Little Tokyo Service Center)
Herbert Martinez (Select Parking/Little Tokyo Car Wash)
Chris Komai (The Rafu Shimpō)
Brian Manley (EQR Residential - Hikari Apartments & Sakura Crossing)
Howard Miyoshi (Zenshuji Buddhist Temple)
Yoshi Morioka (Hiroshima Kenjinkai)
Donegan McCuaig (DTLA Commercial Real Estate)
Kitty Sankey (Japanese Chamber of Commerce of Southern California)
Tetsu Shida (Anime Jungle stores)
Kenji Suzuki (Suehiro Cafe)
Nancy Takayama (Japanese American Citizens League)
Jason Toyoshima (Sushi Gen)
Yoshiko Ueda (U&U Graphics)
Rebecca Young (DoubleTree by Hilton)



Go Little Tokyo's Featured Business: Kouraku

This month, the spotlight shines on **Kouraku**, the 2nd Street restaurant known for serving Japanese-style comfort food. Kouraku (also spelled "Koraku") was established in 1976 on 2nd Street and is one of the few restaurants open until 2 a.m. every day.

[Learn more](#) about owner Hiroshi Yamauchi, his history, and philosophy.

The website, www.golittletokyo.com, a collaboration between Metro and the Little Tokyo Community Council, provides information about discounts, special offers, and things to do and see in Little Tokyo. The site also features a detailed [map](#) with directions on where to find convenient parking and how to get here using public transportation.



Kouraku
314 E. 2nd St.



\$1 OFF

Regular or Combo Meal

VALID ONLY AT LITTLE TOKYO LOCATION, 134 S. CENTRAL AVE, OFFICE DEPOT CENTER.
NOT VALID WITH ANY OTHER COUPON OR OFFER. Offer Expires 05/30/2017.

[DOWNLOAD COUPON](#)

Little Tokyo BID | www.visitlittletokyo.com

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